
Media Kit

USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63)



“America’s Flagship”



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CAPTAIN TODD A. ZECCHIN

Commanding Officer
USS KITTY HAWK (CV 63)

A native of Detroit, Michigan; graduate of Western Michigan University and commissioned through the Aviation Reserve Officer Candidate Program in August 1980. He was presented with the Naval Aviator's Wings of Gold in 1981 and reported to an initial operational assignment flying the P-3B Mod aircraft with Patrol Squadron 6, homeported out of Naval Air Station Barbers Point, Hawaii.

Captain Zecchin's first shore duty assignment was as the Personnel Exchange Program pilot assigned to Royal Air Force No. 42 Squadron at RAF St Mawgan, flying the British Aerospace Nimrod MR Mk II aircraft. After a short stint at the Jet Transitional Training Unit in Kingsville, Texas, he reported for duty at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington, for several flying tours on the EA-6B Prowler. Initially, assigned to Electronic Attack Squadron 141 he deployed aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71) and took part in Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm and Provide Comfort.

His next tour was as the operations officer at Electronic Attack Squadron 138 and subsequent deployment to the Arabian Gulf as a participant in Operation Southern Watch aboard USS Nimitz (CVN 68). From there he proceeded to the EA-6B Fleet Replacement Squadron, Electronic Attack Squadron 129 as the training officer and instructor pilot. The subsequent tour included a period of study at the United States Naval War College in Newport Rhode Island where he earned a Master of Arts Degree in Strategic Studies.

Returning to the Pacific Northwest, he reported back to Electronic Attack Squadron 138 as the executive/commanding officer and completed deployments with Marine Air Group 12, Iwakuni, Japan, and USS Nimitz (CVN 68). In 1999, he led the squadron to Aviano AB, Italy, where they were seconded to the United States Air Force 31st Fighter Wing and participated in Operation Allied Force. Following his aviation command tour, he was assigned as the executive officer of USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67) and deployed to the 5th Fleet AOR for participation in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. Subsequently he served as the Military Communications Electronics Board division chief in the J-6 Directorate of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Prior to assignment on the OPNAV Staff in the N81 Directorate he was the commanding officer of USS Denver (LPD 9) and successfully completed a deployment in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Captain Zecchin assumed command of USS John F. Kennedy (CV 67) in May 2006, and served as the 30th, and final, commanding officer through March 2007.

Captain Zecchin has amassed more than 5,000 flight hours and nearly 600 Carrier landings. His personal decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal (two awards), Air Medal (eight Awards, including combat "V" device), Navy Commendation Medal (five awards, including combat "V" device) and numerous meritorious unit and campaign service awards.



America's Oldest Active Warship

The aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk is the first in a class of three super carriers. Constructed by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation at Camden, N.J., Kitty Hawk was commissioned at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard on April 29, 1961. It is the second U.S. Navy ship named after the small North Carolina town near which Orville and Wilbur Wright flew the first-ever successful controlled, powered aircraft on December 17, 1903.

Following commissioning, Kitty Hawk's first commanding officer, Capt. William F. Bringle, took his new ship around South America to its new homeport in San Diego.

Kitty Hawk departed San Diego in September 1962 on her first extended Western Pacific (WESTPAC) deployment. From 1963 to 1976, Hawk and Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 11 completed eight extended deployments, including six in support of American forces in Vietnam.

In March 1976, Kitty Hawk underwent a year long overhaul in Bremerton, Wash., to convert from an attack (CVA) to a multi-mission carrier (CV). Additional changes allowed Kitty Hawk to launch and recover the Navy's new F-14 Tomcat and S-3 Viking aircraft.

In the late '70s, the ship teamed with CVW-15 for another WESTPAC deployment, which included search and assistance operations to aid Vietnamese refugees. Hawk also offered contingency support off the coast of Korea. The deployment was then extended to support contingency operations in the North Arabian Sea during the Iran hostage crisis. Hawk returned to San Diego in February 1980, and was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation and the Battle Efficiency "E" as the best carrier in the Pacific Fleet.

In January 1982, Kitty Hawk returned to Bremerton for another year long overhaul. Following comprehensive upgrades Kitty Hawk deployed with CVW-2 in 1984 as the flagship for Battle Group Bravo. The ship returned to San Diego August 1, 1984, and in July 1985, Kitty Hawk and CVW-9 deployed again as flagship for Battle Group Bravo. CVW-9 crews logged more than 18,000 flight hours and 7,300 arrested landings.

Kitty Hawk bade farewell to San Diego January 3, 1987, setting out on a six month world cruise. Hawk and CVW-9 spent 106 consecutive days on station in the Indian Ocean, being awarded the Navy Expeditionary Medal and the Meritorious Unit Commendation. The cruise ended at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard July 3. Six months later, Kitty Hawk began a six month overhaul.

With the return of CVW-15 to its decks, Kitty Hawk began its second deployment around "the Horn" of South America to its original homeport of San Diego on December 11, 1991.

In August 1992, Kitty Hawk was appointed as Naval Air Force Pacific Fleet's "ready carrier." The ship embarked Commander, Cruiser-Destroyer Group 5; Commander, Destroyer Squadron 17 and CVW-15 for work-ups before deploying to the Western Pacific in November. Kitty Hawk spent nine days off the coast of Somalia supporting Operation Restore Hope.

Kitty Hawk began her 18th deployment in October 1996. During the six month underway period, the ship visited ports in the Persian Gulf and Western Pacific. Hawk returned to San Diego April 11, 1997, and immediately began a 15 month overhaul.

Kitty Hawk departed San Diego July 6, 1998, to assume new duties as America's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier from USS Independence (CV 62). Hawk also welcomed aboard CVW-5, operating from Atsugi, Japan. Kitty Hawk arrived at her new operating location of Yokosuka, Japan, August 11, 1998.

Kitty Hawk set sail for a planned three-month deployment March 2, 1999, and was ordered to the Arabian Gulf to enforce the No-Fly Zone over Southern Iraq. CVW-5 pilots flew more than 8,800 sorties in 116 days, including 1,300 combat sorties, dropping more than 20 tons of ordnance. Hawk returned to Yokosuka Aug. 25, 1999.

In 2000, Kitty Hawk conducted routine local area operations and participated in Exercise Cobra Gold and Exercise Foal Eagle, and departed again in March 2001 for a spring underway period.

On March 22, 2001, Kitty Hawk became the first aircraft carrier to go pier side in Singapore at the new Changi Naval Base Pier.

In October 2001, following the terrorist attacks at the Pentagon and World Trade Center, Kitty Hawk deployed to the North Arabian Sea in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The ship served as an afloat forward staging base for U.S. Special Forces.

Kitty Hawk received orders in February 2003 and was soon involved in Operations Southern Watch and Iraqi Freedom in the North Persian Gulf, serving 104 continuous days at sea.

Kitty Hawk returned to Yokosuka May 6, entering a dry dock period ending October 17, 2004, was an eventful year that involved a series of inspections, exercises, and port visits. On February 19, 2004, a new chapter in the book of Kitty Hawk Strike Group's history began with the first landing of an F/A-18F Super Hornet on board Kitty Hawk's 4.1-acre flight deck during the ship's 12th FDNF underway period. The VFA-102 "Diamondbacks" introduced the improved F/A-18 E/F "Super Hornet" to the 7th Fleet area of operation, replacing the F-14 Tomcat after more than 30 years of service.

CVW-5 and Kitty Hawk Sailors again joined forces and departed July 19 for Summer Pulse 2004 after a two-month in port period. Summer Pulse 2004 was the first operational test of the Navy's new Fleet Response Plan in which seven aircraft carrier strike groups deployed simultaneously to different areas of the world. Kitty Hawk began a five-month Selected Restricted Availability September 16, enabling the fleet to maintain high levels of readiness under the Navy's Fleet Response Plan.

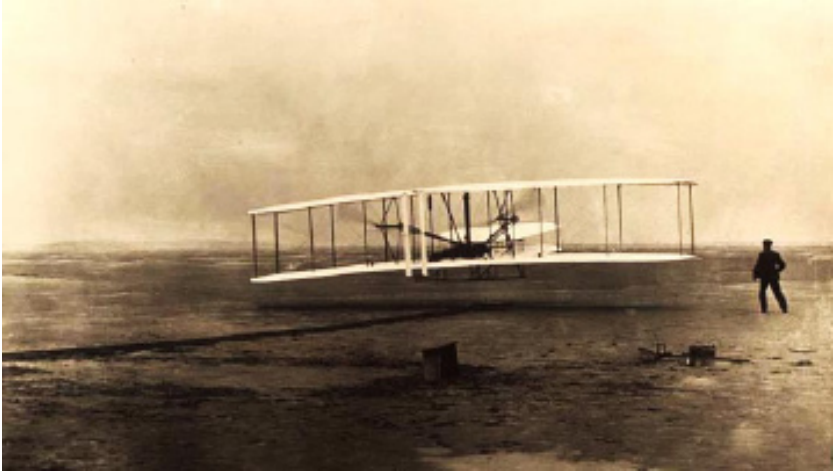
The ship was under way February 10, 2005, for its 14th FDNF underway period. This 46-day winter underway period included two air wing squadron changes of command, port visits to Hong Kong and Busan, South Korea, and extensive air wing cyclic operations and strike training in advance of participating in Exercise Foal Eagle with Korea.

At 46 years old, USS Kitty Hawk is still a vital part of the American naval forces, supporting national policy through the use of power projection and sea control. Kitty Hawk continues to serve as the world's only permanently forward-deployed aircraft carrier, and the oldest active ship in the U.S. Navy.



Our Namesake:

Kitty Hawk, North Carolina



During the late 1500's, European colonists began to settle along the Outer Banks in North Carolina. By the early 1700's, settlers established a community in an area north of Cape Hatteras.

For about 200 years, the people of Kitty Hawk lived comfortably in relative seclusion. The people supported themselves by living off the bounty of the land. By the late 19th century, the economy was supplemented by whaling, boat-building, and the U.S. Coast Guard, which opened a station on Kitty Hawk beach in 1874.

It was to this community that two brothers from Dayton, Ohio, came in September 1900, looking for low hills, steady winds and wide open spaces. The place they found was Kill Devil Hills, located just south of Kitty Hawk. Here, Orville and Wilbur Wright began experiments that would revolutionize travel.

Through experimentation with kites, gliders and a redesigned wind tunnel, the Wright brothers were able to design and build a wing that produced enough lift for a powered takeoff. With further testing, the brothers were able to refine the flight controls that were used on their first aircraft, The Kitty Hawk Flyer.

On the morning of December 17, 1903, the Wright brothers achieved the first ever recorded powered flights. In all, they completed four flights, the longest of which lasted 57 seconds.

At about the same time, the economy of Kitty Hawk began to wither. Ironically, the very success of the Wright brothers was a contributing factor, as fewer people were now relying on the sea to move goods. By the 1920s, the citizens of Kitty Hawk embarked on a far-reaching program to promote tourism and recreation in the area, helped by the postwar boom in the 1940s. Today, almost a century after the discovery of flight, thousands of tourists flock each year to the town immortalized as the birthplace of aviation.

The Ship's Departments

An aircraft carrier is really a floating city. To run Kitty Hawk efficiently, the ship requires an infrastructure similar to that of a city. The duties of the Commanding Officer (CO) are similar to those of a mayor. He is ultimately responsible for the welfare of the ship and its crew, and establishes guidelines under which the ship operates. Next comes the Executive Officer (XO), who is similar in many respects to a city manager. The XO ensures the CO's guidelines are implemented and the daily functions on board the ship run smoothly. The ship is further divided in 18 departments, each with a specific area of responsibility and expertise. Working together, these departments provide the range of services required to support Kitty Hawk's ship and air wing crew of more than 5,000.

AIMD

The Aircraft Intermediate Maintenance Department, or AIMD, provides intermediate-level maintenance support for embarked aircraft. This includes maintenance beyond routine level maintenance performed by the squadrons themselves and can include almost any type of repair. AIMD has a jet engine shop, electronics repair facilities, and the ability to repair and fabricate airframe and structural components.

AIR

Air Department is perhaps the most visible department. It includes the Sailors who work on the flight deck and associated equipment. This includes the catapults, arresting gear, crash and salvage team, optical landing system, aircraft refueling crews, primary flight control (the tower), and aircraft handlers on the flight deck and hangar bays.

RELIGIOUS MINISTRIES

Attending to the spiritual needs of the crew and air wing is the job of the Religious Ministries department. Three chaplains perform religious services, and religious programs specialists assist all faiths in coordinating worship services and other activities. The department also runs one of the largest libraries afloat for the reading enjoyment of the crew.

COMBAT SYSTEMS

Expert operation and maintenance of the ship's Command, Control Computers, Communication, Combat systems and Intelligence (C4I) suites are the mainstay of the Combat Systems department. In addition to maintaining e-mail access for the entire crew, they are responsible for more than 5,000 pieces of radar, satellite communications and computer equipment.

DECK

Deck Department is the home of "traditional" seamanship skills. Boatswain's Mates operate the ship's small craft, mooring lines, anchors and refueling and underway replenishment rigs for taking on supplies at sea. They also "drive the ship" standing watch as helmsmen on the bridge.

DENTAL

Five dentists including an oral surgeon and prosthodontist, and a staff of dental technicians care for the crew's dental health needs.

ENGINEERING

Engineering Department operates all machinery that provide for the ship's propulsion, including the eight boilers that generate steam for the four main engines and aircraft catapults. It also provides for all the ship's services, including electricity, steam, fresh water, telephones, fire-fighting water, and sewage. The engineers provide valuable machine shop services, from sheet metal fabrication, casting foundry, fine mill, and machine work, and coordinate the ship's "fire department," or damage control organization.

EXECUTIVE

Coordinating the ship's personnel and administration are the functions of Executive department. The ship's Personnel Office coordinates the placement of more than 2,800 personnel and the administration of all enlisted service records. In addition to maintaining officer records, the Captain's Office coordinates and implements Navy and ship policies. Special programs include equal opportunity, substance abuse prevention, and other counseling and assistance.

LEGAL

Two legal officers and a staff of legal assistants provide legal support to the ship, air wing, command staffs, and ships in company.

MAINTENANCE

Maintenance Department coordinates all shipboard prevention maintenance, periodic maintenance and major repairs, in port and underway. It ensures the ship maintains its peak material condition to ensure its combat ready at all times.

MEDIA

The Media Department is the control center for all public relations on the ship. The Public Affairs Office coordinates and executes all media liaison work, including visits by foreign dignitaries, while maintaining the ship's television system, and providing a daily newspaper for the crew at sea. They also have a full-service print shop and photo lab which support the fleet in communicating through photographs and multimedia productions, getting the news out about Kitty Hawk and strengthening our relationships with allied nations.

MEDICAL

Providing medical services to more than 5,000 Sailors, Medical Department consists of a fully-staffed medical facility with most of the services found in hospitals. The ward can accommodate 52 patients, and the ship's doctors, corpsman and nurses provide routine and emergency medical support both on the ship and throughout the strike group (via helicopter).

NAVIGATION

Tracking the ship's position is critical for the safety of the ship and the air wing, naval aircraft generally rely on the ship to provide reference information for tactical strikes. The navigator and ship's quartermasters use visual, celestial, inertial, electronic, and satellite navigation systems to know precisely where the ship is at all times, in all weather conditions.

OPERATIONS

Often referred to as the "nerve center" of the ship, Combat Direction Center (CDC) controls

the employment of all the ship's weapons systems, in addition to those highly visible parts of the Operations Department, air operations, carrier air traffic control center (CATCC), strike operations, meteorology and oceanography, and the carrier intelligence center (CVIC), all provide critical planning, control, analysis and coordination functions to ensure mission success.

SAFETY

One of the smallest but most vital departments on the ship, Safety provides information, training and procedures to ensure the safe operation of the ship. The safety officer, the industrial hygienist, and a group of trained senior petty officers coordinate safety training via a network of safety petty officers from each division.

SUPPLY

Ensures sustained carrier operations through a responsive logistic support system for both the ship and air wing. Supply prepares and serves 18,000 meals per day, does the crew's laundry, operates the hazardous material safety program, three ship's stores, the post office, the ship's payroll, as well as the Morale, Welfare and Recreation program.

TRAINING

Training is a top priority because of the vast amount of high-tech equipment and complex systems on board. Training ensures the crew is well trained by coordinating the indoctrination program for all new personnel, scheduling required schools, tracking all training exercises, and coordinating professional and personal education for advancement for the crew.

WEAPONS

Provides the ship and air wing with all training and operational munitions. Weapons department requisitions, receives, stows, inventories, assembles, and transports all ammunition, bombs, mines, cartridges, bullets, missiles, grenades, and demolition charges. Departmental personnel also man the small arms mounts.

The Aircraft of Kitty Hawk

Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 moved to Kitty Hawk in July 1998. The air wing now consists of seven squadrons and two detachments. As a permanent element of 7th Fleet and operating from the Northern Pacific to the Persian Gulf, the Kitty Hawk/CVW-5 team represents a formidable deterrent to aggression.



VFA-102 Diamondbacks F/A-18F Super Hornets are the Navy's new long-range, multi-mission, all-weather strike fighter. The Super Hornet can conduct day/night air-to-air/air-to-ground missions, strike with precision guided weapons, fighter-escort, close air support, suppress enemy air defenses, reconnaissance, and forward air control and refueling.

VFA-195 Dambusters F/A-18C Hornets are both fighter and attack aircraft. Superb flight characteristics and payload versatility make it a true force multiplier whether attacking targets with the strike force, or, with a change in weapons payload, flying overhead as an air interceptor.



VAQ-136 Gauntlets EA-6B Prowlers are used for electronic warfare support of the strike force. The Prowlers sensitive receivers and high-powered electronic jammers enable its four-person crew to confuse enemy radar and radio equipment. The Prowler is one of the most expensive planes in the air wing.

VRC-30 Det 5 Providers C-2A Greyhounds, or Carrier Onboard Delivery (COD), are a welcome sight to the Kitty Hawk crew. In addition to bringing people, parts and supplies aboard, it is the primary means to bring mail from family members and friends ashore.



VFA-27 Royal Maces F/A-18E Super Hornets are the Navy's premier all purpose, all weather aircraft. The Super Hornet can carry up to 18,000 lbs. of weapons, with a maximum takeoff weight of 66,000 lbs. The F/A-18E performs both air-to-air and air-to-ground missions as well as aerial refueling for the airwing.



VFA-192 Golden Dragons F/A-18C Hornets are all-weather fighters and attack aircraft. The single-seat F/A-18C Hornet was the nation's first strike-fighter. The F/A-18C is a twin engine, mid-wing, multi-mission tactical aircraft.



VAW-115 Liberty Bells E-2C Hawkeye are the eyes of the air wing. The Hawkeye's electronic dome allows its five-person air crew to provide air intercept information, attack mission data, air traffic control instructions, and offer search-and-rescue assistance.



HSL-51 Det 3 Warlords' Sikorsky SH-60B Light Airborne Multipurpose System (LAMPS) Mk III Seahawk helicopters provide combat-ready armed, anti-surface and anti-submarine helicopter missions to the Kitty Hawk Strike Group.



HS-14 Chargers SH-60F Seahawk helicopters are equipped with a dipping sonar dome and two Mark 46 torpedoes for close-in, anti-submarine missions to the ship. The Chargers also fly the HH-60H helicopter providing combat search and rescue, as well as anti surface and naval special warfare support missions.



Aircraft Launch and Recovery

Kitty Hawk is equipped with four steam catapults which are capable of propelling the heaviest carrier aircraft from the flight deck at speeds in excess of 180 m.p.h. These speeds are reached from a standing start in less than two seconds during the 250-foot catapult launch stroke. An equivalent land-based takeoff would require nearly 6,000 feet of runway.



The Launch, or “Cat Shot”

Two of Kitty Hawk’s four steam powered catapults, or “cats” are located on the bow, and the other two are located in the center of the ship, on the port side, known as the waist. The cats consist of large pistons underneath the deck. Above the deck, only a small device engages the aircraft nose gear.

When the plane is ready for takeoff, the aircraft handlers on the flight deck guide the plane onto the cat, where it is hooked up by its nose gear. After a final check the aircraft is shot off the cat. The pistons are stopped at the end by water brakes and return to their original position to do it all over again.

Arresting Gear

Five arresting gear engines are used to “trap” landing aircraft. Four of these engines are normally on line, with the fifth engine held in reserve for emergency barricade landings. The aircraft’s tailhook engages a cross-deck pendant, which is attached to a cable woven around the arresting gear engine. Aircraft landing at speeds up to 160 m.p.h. are brought to a halt within about 300 feet after grabbing, or “trapping,” the wire.



The Arrested Recovery, or “Trap”

Aircraft are recovered on board in a process known as an arrested landing. The design of a naval aircraft starts with the airframe and landing gear, as they must withstand a tremendous shock each time the aircraft launches or lands.

The goal of a landing is for a pilot to have the aircraft’s tailhook grab one of the four arresting wires stretched across the flight deck. These wires are about 40 feet apart, two inches off the deck, and are connected to the arresting engines (large hydraulic-mechanical devices which spool out tensioned wire and absorb the momentum of the aircraft).

To land, the pilot uses the carrier’s optical landing system, called Fresnel lens, also known as “the ball.” This system emits a beam of light, which tells the pilot if the aircraft’s approach is high or low. By following the glide slope established by “the ball,” the pilot can place the tailhook of the aircraft so it catches the desired wire (usually the third wire).

While approaching, the speed of the aircraft is kept slightly above stall speed. When the aircraft hits the deck the pilot immediately applies full power, in case the plane “bolters,” or fails to catch the wire. This way, the aircraft has enough power and air speed to get safely airborne for another attempt.

Aircraft Carriers

Enduring Assets for a Maritime Nation

USS Kitty Hawk is an impressive sight. Nearly 1,100 feet long and displacing over 80,000 tons, the sheer size of this “floating city” is staggering. But the real marvel of an aircraft carrier is the enormous amount of activity concentrated in such a relatively small area. On the flight deck and in the hangar bays, the air wing operates more than 70 aircraft. Below, in the engineering spaces, eight boilers provide steam for propulsion and electricity. The size and complexity of an aircraft carrier only hints at the importance of these ships as part of America’s Navy. No other country has ever deployed as formidable a ship as the Kitty Hawk and other U.S. aircraft carriers.

Forward Deployed Naval Forces

Aircraft carriers are routinely forward deployed around the world, engaging in joint (U.S. Navy, Marine, Army, and Air Force) and combined (with allied nations) exercises. These exercises hone our combat skills, as well as providing valuable experience in operating with other forces.

While deployed, aircraft carriers operate in international waters, providing a reassuring presence to allies and a warning to our potential enemies. The presence can be quickly increased or withdrawn as the situation dictates. Should the situation require it, the aircraft carrier and air wing team are ready on arrival to accomplish whatever mission given, from unobtrusive surveillance to devastating strikes -- and anything in-between.



Powerful, Flexible Forces

Aircraft carriers are the single most flexible force in the U.S. arsenal. The traditional carrier air wing, consisting of a mixture of aircraft types, is able to meet virtually any emergent security need. When deployed, the carrier can be counted on to quickly respond to nearly any tasking with its own assets.

The air wing is also an extremely flexible force structure. If the situation requires it, the air wing can be quickly tailored to suit the mission by changing the aircraft mix. This could be as small a change as removing Navy patrol aircraft and adding Navy fighters, or as radical as removing much of the air wing in favor of Marine Corps and Army helicopters. This kind of “adaptive joint-force packaging” has been demonstrated in recent military actions.

Endurance

An aircraft carrier has the ability to remain in international waters for an indefinite time, unmatched by any other military asset. Large troop movements or long-range aircraft patrols from the U.S. can be both expensive and an unnecessary escalation of conflict.

Endurance is a function of the Navy’s logistic support forces. Although the ship carries a great quantity of fuel, food and spare parts for sustained, unsupported operations, it must still be replenished on a regular basis.

To resupply, Navy oilers and combat support ships bring boiler and aviation fuel, fresh food and weapons. Critical parts and mail are brought by C-2 cargo planes. In essence, the Kitty Hawk can continue operations almost indefinitely, if necessary, without entering port.

Ready Today and Tomorrow

The modern aircraft carrier is a marvel of complexity. However, the single goal of combat readiness is the heart of its mission. Optimized during an evolutionary process, Kitty Hawk is the product of not only skilled shipbuilders, but great ships and Sailors, who sailed before. The lessons learned in millions of miles of steaming, countless aircraft launches and recoveries, and a myriad of missions, in both peace and war make today’s U.S. Navy aircraft carriers the most powerful warships ever built, ready to take on the challenges of tomorrow.



PLACES OF INTEREST

Hangar Bay

The primary function of the hangar bay is to store, and serve as the repair site for the ship's aircraft. About one-third of the 75 aircraft on board can be kept in the hangar bay, with the remainder staged on the flight deck. Aircraft are lifted from the hangar bay to the flight deck by one of the ship's four aircraft elevators, each able to transport 130,000 pounds, or two airplanes.

Combat Direction Center

The Combat Direction Center (CDC) is the ship's eyes and ears. Kitty Hawk's CDC is one of the most modern in the fleet with computer-enhanced air detection systems. In CDC, four warfare modules compile specific data and relay it to the Tactical Action Officer (TAO) where it is displayed in real time on large, computer screens. The TAO uses this information to assist the Captain in defending the ship against attack and employ the air wing on offensive missions.

Forecastle

Both of the Kitty Hawk's 30-ton (27 metric ton) anchors are raised or lowered from the Forecastle (pronounced folk-sull). The anchors are each supported by more than 1,000 (over 300m) feet of anchor chain. Each link of the chain weighs 360 pounds (162kg). It is actually the weight of the chain resting on the bottom that holds the ship in place at anchorage.

Flight Deck

The Flight Deck is often described as one of the most dangerous places in the world, because of the continual flow of aircraft launching and landing in a single confined area. Kitty Hawk uses its four steam-powered catapults to launch planes from its 1,065-foot-long (323m) flight deck at a rate of one plane every 30 seconds. The catapult, in conjunction with the plane's own engines, allows the plane to accelerate from 0 to 180 miles per hour in just two seconds.

Landing requires not only nerves of steel, but cables of steel as well. Four one-and-1/2 inch diameter arresting wires are used to "trap" an incoming aircraft. These cables rest about two inches above the flight deck and when caught in the plane's tailhook, will bring the plane to a stop in less than 300 feet (100m).

Navigational Bridge

The Navigational Bridge is where the ship's commands are issued. At sea, the Captain remains on the Bridge whenever the ship is conducting flight operations or other special evolutions. Assisting the Captain is the Officer of the Deck (OOD), who ensures the safe navigation and operation of the ship. The Conning Officer, or Junior Officer of the Deck, works for the OOD. It is the OOD's responsibility to maneuver the ship by providing orders to the Helmsman, who steers the ship, and the Lee Helmsman, who communicates speed changes to the engineers via the engine order telegraph. The Navigator and the Quartermasters use several types of navigational aids, including satellites and the stars, to provide course recommendations to the OOD.

HAWK by the numbers ...

Builder/Total cost.....	New York Shipbuilding/\$265,200,000 in 1961
Commissioned.....	April 29, 1961
Length/Width/Draft.....	1,065 feet (323m)/282 feet (86m)/38 feet (12m)
Average displacement.....	81,788 tons (74,197 metric tons)
Total height above waterline.....	201 feet (61m)
Total number of decks & levels ("floors").....	8 decks and 11 levels
Speed.....	30 knots plus (56+kph)
Engines/Boilers.....	Four/Eight
Electrical system capacity.....	14,000,000 watts
Fuel capacity.....	2,000,000 gallons (7,600,000L)
Anchors.....	30 tons each (54 metric tons)
Weight of anchor links.....	360 pounds each (162kg)
Maximum length of anchor chain.....	port 990 feet (302m) starboard 1,080 feet (327m)
Propellers.....	Four, 21 feet wide (7m)
Total number of compartments and spaces.....	2,400 plus
Aircraft capacity.....	75 plus
Flight deck area/Hangar bay area.....	4.1 acres (1.64 hectares)/1.6 acres (.64 hectares)
Number of catapults/Arresting gear.....	Four, steam-powered/Four
Catapult length.....	250 feet (80m)
Effective landing area.....	120 feet (36m)
Aircraft elevators.....	Four
Elevator lifting capacity.....	130,000 pounds each (58,500kg)
Crew (with air wing).....	2,800 (5,300)
Sea Sparrow launchers.....	Two, eight missiles each
Rolling Airframe Missile (RAM) Launchers.....	Two, 21 missiles each
Close-in Weapons System (CIWS) mounts.....	Two batteries, 1,500 rounds each
.50-cal gun mounts.....	Nine, 2,000-yard effective range (1,820m)
M-60 firing areas.....	Four, 650-yard effective range (591.5m)
General quarters repair lockers.....	11
Doctors and surgeons.....	Seven
Operating rooms and triage areas.....	Six
Hospital beds.....	65
Dentists/Lawyers/Chaplains.....	Five/Two/Three
Ship's retail stores.....	Two
Barber shops.....	Two
Post office/Pounds of mail processed a day.....	One/2,500 pounds (1125kg)
Telephones/computers.....	3,500/1,500
Public works force.....	300 personnel
Closed-circuit television (w/worldwide satellite capability).....	Four (12) channels
Average annual payroll.....	\$145,000,000
Number of ATMs/pay accounts.....	Four/5,000
Meals served daily (with air wing).....	12,000-plus
Loaves of bread baked daily.....	900-plus
Water distilled daily.....	340,000 gallons (1,287,040L)
Average number of stock items received daily.....	330
Pounds of cargo received daily.....	18,000(8,165kg)
Inventory line items carried.....	60,000
Exercise facilities.....	Five
Average Soda consumption daily.....	5,040 cans